

# Profile

India is one of the oldest civilizations in the world with a kaleidoscopic variety and rich cultural heritage. It has achieved all-round socio-economic progress during the last 65 years of its Independence. India has become self-sufficient in agricultural production and is now one of the top industrialised countries in the world and one of the few nations to have gone into outer space to conquer nature for the benefit of the people. It covers an area of 3,287,590 sq. km (1,269,346 sq mi), extending from the snow-covered Himalayan heights to the tropical rain forests of the south. As the 7th largest country in the world, India stands apart from the rest of Asia, marked off as it is by mountains and the sea, which give the country a distinct geographical entity. Bounded by the Great Himalayas in the north, it stretches southwards and at the Tropic of Cancer, tapers off into the Indian Ocean between the Bay of Bengal on the east and the Arabian Sea on the west.

Lying entirely in the northern hemisphere, the mainland extends between latitudes 8° 4' and 37° 6' north, longitudes 68° 7' and 97° 25' east and measures about 3,214 km from north to south between the extreme latitudes and about 2,933 km from east to west between the extreme longitudes. It has a land frontier of about 15,200 km. The total length of the coastline of the mainland, Lakshadweep Islands and Andaman & Nicobar Islands is 7,516.6 km.

## GEOGRAPHY



| Particulars                   | Description  |
|-------------------------------|--|
| <b>Location</b>               | The Indian peninsula is separated from mainland Asia by the Himalayas. The Country is surrounded by the Bay of Bengal in the east, the Arabian Sea in the west, and the Indian Ocean to the south. |
| <b>Geographic Coordinates</b> | Lying entirely in the Northern Hemisphere, the Country extends between 8° 4' and 37° 6' latitudes north of the Equator, and 68° 7' and 97° 25' longitudes east of it.                              |
| <b>Indian Standard Time</b>   | GMT + 05:30  |
| <b>Area</b>                   | 3.3 Million sq. km   |
| <b>Telephone Country Code</b> | +91  |

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| <b>Border Countries</b>                       | Afghanistan and Pakistan to the north-west; China, Bhutan and Nepal to the north; Myanmar to the east; and Bangladesh to the east of West Bengal. Sri Lanka is separated from India by a narrow channel of sea, formed by Palk Strait and the Gulf of Mannar.   |
| <b>Coastline</b>                              | 7,517 km encompassing the mainland, Lakshadweep Islands, and the Andaman & Nicobar Islands.   |
| <b>Climate</b>                                | <p>The climate of India can broadly be classified as a tropical monsoon one. But, in spite of much of the northern part of India lying beyond the tropical zone, the entire country has a tropical climate marked by relatively high temperatures and dry winters. There are four seasons:</p> <p>winter (December-February)<br/> summer (March-June)<br/> south-west monsoon season (June-September)<br/> post monsoon season (October-November)</p>                 |
| <b>Terrain</b>                                | The mainland comprises of four regions, namely the great mountain zone, plains of the Ganga and the Indus, the desert region, and the southern peninsula.   |
| <b>Natural Resources</b>                      | Coal, iron ore, manganese ore, mica, bauxite, petroleum, titanium ore, chromite, natural gas, magnesite, limestone, arable land, dolomite, barytes, kaolin, gypsum, apatite, phosphorite, steatite, fluorite, etc.  |
| <b>Natural Hazards</b>                        | Monsoon floods, flash floods, earthquakes, droughts, and landslides.  |
| <b>Environment - Current Issues</b>           | Air pollution control, energy conservation, solid waste management, oil and gas conservation, forest conservation, etc.   |
| <b>Environment - International Agreements</b> | Rio Declaration on environment and development, Cartagena Protocol on biosafety, Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on climatic change, World Trade Agreement, Helsinki Protocol to LRTAP on the reduction of sulphur emissions of nitrogen oxides or their transboundary fluxes (Nox Protocol), and Geneva Protocol to LRTAP concerning the control of emissions of volatile organic compounds or their transboundary fluxes (VOCs Protocol). |
| <b>Geography - Note</b>                       | India occupies a major portion of the south Asian subcontinent.   |

## PEOPLE



| Particulars                   | Description  |
|-------------------------------|--|
| <b>Population</b>             | India's population, as on 1 March 2011 stood at 1,210,193,422 (623.7 million males and 586.4 million females).   |
| <b>Population Growth Rate</b> | The average annual exponential growth rate stands at 1.64 per cent during 2001-2011.   |
| <b>Birth Rate</b>             | The Crude Birth rate was 18.3 in 2009.   |
| <b>Death Rate</b>             | The Crude Death rate was 7.3 in 2009.  |
| <b>Life Expectancy Rate</b>   | 65.8 years (Males); 68.1 years (Females) in the period 2006-2011.  |
| <b>Sex Ratio</b>              | 940 females per 1000 males according to 2011 census  |
| <b>Nationality</b>            | Indian   |
| <b>Ethnic Groups</b>          | All the five major racial types - Australoid, Mongoloid, Europoid, Caucasian, and Negroid find representation among the people of India.   |
| <b>Religions</b>              | According to the 2001 census, out of the total population of 1,028 million in the Country, Hindus constituted the majority with 80.5%, Muslims came second at 13.4%, followed by Christians, Sikhs, Buddhists, Jains, and others.          |
| <b>Languages</b>              | There are 22 different languages that have been recognised by the Constitution of India, of which Hindi is an Official Language. Article 343(3) empowered Parliament to provide by law for continued use of English for official purposes. |

**Literacy**

According to the provisional results of the 2011 census, the literacy rate in the Country stands at 74.04 per cent, 82.14% for males and 65.46% for females.

## GOVERNMENT



| Particulars                     | Description  |
|---------------------------------|--|
| <b>Country Name</b>             | Republic of India; Bharat Ganrajya   |
| <b>Government Type</b>          | Sovereign Socialist Secular Democratic Republic with a Parliamentary system of Government.   |
| <b>Capital</b>                  | New Delhi  |
| <b>Administrative Divisions</b> | <a href="#">28 States</a> and <a href="#">7 Union Territories</a> .  |
| <b>Independence</b>             | 15 <sup>th</sup> August 1947 (From the British Colonial Rule)  |
| <b>Constitution</b>             | The <a href="#">Constitution of India</a> came into force on 26 <sup>th</sup> January 1950.  |
| <b>Legal System</b>             | The <a href="#">Constitution of India</a> is the fountain source of the legal system in the Country.   |
| Executive Branch                | The <a href="#">President of India</a> is the Head of the State, while the <a href="#">Prime Minister</a> is the Head of the Government, and runs office with the support of the <a href="#">Council of Ministers</a> who form the Cabinet Ministry. |

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| <b>Legislative Branch</b> | The Indian Legislature comprises of the <a href="#">Lok Sabha</a> (House of the People) and the <a href="#">Rajya Sabha</a> (Council of States) forming both the Houses of the Parliament.  |
| <b>Judicial Branch</b>    | The Supreme Court of India is the apex body of the Indian legal system, followed by other High Courts and subordinate Courts.   |
| <b>Flag Description</b>   | The <a href="#">National Flag</a> is a horizontal tricolour of deep saffron (kesaria) at the top, white in the middle, and dark green at the bottom in equal proportion. At the centre of the white band is a navy blue wheel, which is a representation of the Ashoka Chakra at Sarnath. |
| <b>National Days</b>      | 26 <sup>th</sup> January ( <a href="#">Republic Day</a> )<br>15 <sup>th</sup> August ( <a href="#">Independence Day</a> )<br>2 <sup>nd</sup> October (Gandhi Jayanti; Mahatma Gandhi's Birthday)  |

## Ancient History

India's history and culture is dynamic, spanning back to the beginning of human civilization. It begins with a mysterious culture along the Indus River and in farming communities in the southern lands of India. The history of India is punctuated by constant integration of migrating people with the diverse cultures that surround India. Available evidence suggests that the use of iron, copper and other metals was widely prevalent in the Indian sub-continent at a fairly early period, which is indicative of the progress that this part of the world had made. By the end of the fourth millennium BC, India had emerged as a region of highly developed civilization.

### The Indus Valley Civilization

The History of India begins with the birth of the Indus Valley Civilization, more precisely known as Harappan Civilization. It flourished around 2,500 BC, in the western part of South Asia, what today is Pakistan and Western India. The Indus Valley was home to the largest of the four ancient urban civilizations of Egypt, Mesopotamia, India and China. Nothing was known about this civilization till 1920s when the Archaeological Department of India carried out excavations in the Indus valley wherein the ruins of the two old cities, viz. Mohenjodaro and Harappa were unearthed. The ruins of buildings and other things like household articles, weapons of war, gold and silver ornaments, seals, toys, pottery wares, etc., show that some four to five thousand years ago a highly developed Civilization flourished in this region.

The Indus valley civilization was basically an urban civilization and the people lived in well-planned and well-built towns, which were also the centers for trade. The ruins of Mohenjodaro and Harappa show that these were magnificent merchant cities-well planned, scientifically laid, and well looked after. They had wide roads and a well-developed drainage system. The houses were made of baked bricks and had two or more storeys.

The highly civilized Harappans knew the art of growing cereals, and wheat and barley constituted their staple food. They consumed vegetables and fruits and ate mutton, pork and eggs as well. Evidences also show that they wore cotton as well as woollen garments. By 1500 BC, the Harappan culture came to an end. Among various causes ascribed to the decay of Indus Valley Civilization are the invasion by the Aryans, the recurrent floods and other natural causes like earthquake, etc.

# National Symbols

This section introduces you to the National Identity Elements of India. These symbols are intrinsic to the Indian identity and heritage. Indians of all demographics backgrounds across the world are proud of these National Symbols as they infuse a sense of pride and patriotism in every Indian's heart.

## National Flag



The National Flag is a horizontal tricolour of deep saffron (kesaria) at the top, white in the middle and dark green at the bottom in equal proportion. The ratio of width of the flag to its length is two to three. In the centre of the white band is a navy-blue wheel which represents the chakra.

The top saffron colour, indicates the strength and courage of the country. The white middle band indicates peace and truth with Dharma Chakra. The green shows the fertility, growth and auspiciousness of the land.

Its design is that of the wheel which appears on the abacus of the Sarnath Lion Capital of Ashoka. Its diameter approximates to the width of the white band and it has 24 spokes. The design of the National Flag was adopted by the Constituent Assembly of India on 22 July 1947.

## National Anthem

The National Anthem of India Jana-gana-mana, composed originally in Bengali by Rabindranath Tagore, was adopted in its Hindi version by the Constituent Assembly as the National Anthem of India on 24 January 1950. It was first sung on 27 December 1911 at the Kolkata Session of the Indian National Congress.

The complete song consists of five stanzas. The first stanza contains the full version of the National Anthem.

Playing time of the full version of the national anthem is approximately 52 seconds. A short version consisting of the first and last lines of the stanza (playing time approximately 20 seconds) is also played on certain occasions.

## National Song

The song Vande Mataram, composed in Sanskrit by Bankimchandra Chatterji, was a source of inspiration to the people in their struggle for freedom. It has an equal status with Jana-gana-mana. On January 24, 1950, the President, Dr. Rajendra Prasad came up with a statement in the Constituent Assembly, "the song Vande Mataram, which has played a historic part in the struggle for Indian freedom, shall be honoured equally with Jana Gana Mana and shall have equal status with it."

The first political occasion when it was sung was the 1896 session of the Indian National Congress. The song was a part of Bankimchandra's most famous novel Anand Math (1882).

## National Bird



The Indian peacock, *Pavo cristatus*, the National Bird of India, is a colourful, swan-sized bird, with a fan-shaped crest of feathers, a white patch under the eye and a long, slender neck. The male of the species is more colourful than the female, with a glistening blue breast and neck and a spectacular bronze-green tail of around 200 elongated feathers. The female is brownish, slightly smaller than the male and lacks the tail. The elaborate courtship dance of the male, fanning out the tail and preening its feathers is a gorgeous sight.

## National Flower



Lotus (*Nelumbo Nucifera Gaertn*) is the National Flower of India. It is a sacred flower and occupies a unique position in the art and mythology of ancient India and has been an auspicious symbol of Indian culture since time immemorial. India is rich in flora. Currently available data place India in the tenth position in the world and fourth in Asia in plant diversity. From about 70 per cent geographical area surveyed so far, 47,000 species of plants have been described by the Botanical Survey of India (BSI).

## States and Union Territories

India, a union of states, is a Sovereign, Secular, Democratic Republic with a Parliamentary system of Government. The President is the constitutional head of Executive of the Union. In the states, the Governor, as the representative of the President, is the head of Executive. The system of government in states closely resembles that of the Union. There are 28 states and 7 Union territories in the country. Union Territories are administered by the President through an Administrator appointed by him/her. From the largest to the smallest, each State/UT of India has a unique demography, history and culture, dress, festivals, language etc. This section introduces you to the various States/UTs in the Country and urges you to explore their magnificent uniqueness...

### States

- [Andhra Pradesh](#)
- [Arunachal Pradesh](#)
- [Assam](#)
- [Bihar](#)
- [Chhattisgarh](#)
- [Goa](#)
- [Gujarat](#)
- [Haryana](#)
- [Himachal Pradesh](#)
- [Jammu and Kashmir](#)
- [Jharkhand](#)
- [Karnataka](#)
- [Kerala](#)
- [Madhya Pradesh](#)
- [Maharashtra](#)
- [Manipur](#)
- [Meghalaya](#)
- [Mizoram](#)
- [Nagaland](#)
- [Odisha](#)
- [Punjab](#)
- [Rajasthan](#)
- [Sikkim](#)
- [Tamil Nadu](#)
- [Tripura](#)

- Uttarakhand
- Uttar Pradesh
- West Bengal

## Union Territories

- Andaman and Nicobar Islands
- Chandigarh
- Daman and Diu
- Dadra and Nagar Haveli
- The Government of NCT of Delhi
- Puducherry
- Lakshadweep

## Lifestyle, Values & Beliefs

India is a diverse country, a fact that is visibly prominent in its people, culture and climate. From the eternal snows of the Himalayas to the cultivated peninsula of far South, from the deserts of the West to the humid deltas of the East, from the dry heat and cold of the Central Plateau to the cool forest foothills, Indian lifestyles clearly glorify the geography. The food, clothing and habits of an Indian differ in accordance to the place of origin.

## Culture

The Indian culture varies like its vast geography. People speak in different languages, dress differently, follow different religions, eat different food but are of the same temperament. So whether it is a joyous occasion or a moment of grief, people participate whole-heartedly, feeling the happiness or pain. A festival or a celebration is never constrained to a family or a home. The whole community or neighbourhood is involved in bringing liveliness to an occasion. Likewise, an Indian wedding is a celebration of union, not only of the bride and groom, but also of two families, maybe cultures or religion too! Similarly, in times of sorrow, neighbours and friends play an important part in easing out the grief.

## Science

The global image of India is that of an upcoming and progressive nation. True, India has leaped many boundaries in all sectors- commerce, technology and development etc in the recent past, yet she has not neglected her other creative genius. Wondering what it is? Well, it is the alternative science that has been continuously practiced in India since times immemorial. Ayurveda, is a distinct form of medicine made purely of herbs and natural weeds, that can cure any ailment of the world. Ayurveda has also been mentioned in the Ancient Indian epics like Ramayana. Even today, when the western concept of medicine has reached its zenith, there are people looking for alternative methods of treatment for its multifarious qualities.

With increasing complexities in one's lives these days, people are perpetually looking for a medium through which they get some peace of mind. This is where another science, that of meditation and spirituality comes into the scene. Meditation and Yoga are synonymous with India and Indian spirituality. Meditation is one of the most important components of Yoga, which is a mind-body therapy involving a series of exercises. The word 'meditation' covers many disparate practices from visualizing situations, focusing on objects or images, thinking through a complex idea, or even getting lost in a provocative book, all qualifying as meditation in the broad sense. However in Yoga, meditation generally refers to the more formal practice of focusing the mind and observing oneself in the moment. Many people from India and abroad are resorting to yoga and meditation to de-stress and rejuvenate their mind.

Another widely followed phenomena in India is the Doctrine of Karma that preaches that every person should behave justly as every act or deed comes back in full circle in one of the births of an individual.

A very important aspect of India in the recent past is the emergence of the New Age woman. Women in India are predominantly homemakers, though this perspective is changing. In many places, especially metros and other cities, women are the bread earners of the house or are at par with their male counterparts. The increase in the cost of living/economy has also contributed to the rise in this aspect.

The beauty of the Indian people lies in their spirit of tolerance, give-and-take and a composition of cultures that can be compared to a garden of flowers of various colours and shades of which, while maintaining their own entity, lend harmony and beauty to the garden - India!

## Ethnicity of India

With a population of 1,210,193,422 as accounted by the March 1, 2011 population census, India is a colourful canvas portraying a unique assimilation of ethnic groups displaying varied cultures and religions. In fact, this uniqueness in the ethnicity of the country is the factor that makes it different from other nations. Moreover, the vastness of India's nationalism, accounting to a plethora of cultural extravaganza, religions, etc. is the reason that the country is seen more as a seat for a major world civilization than a mere nation-state.

Since ancient times, the spiritual land of India has displayed varied hues of culture, religion, race, language, and so on. This variety in race, culture, religion, etc. accounts for the existence of different ethnic groups who, although, live within the sanctums of one single nation, profess different social habits and characteristics. Regional territories in India play an important role in differentiating these ethnic groups, with their own social and cultural identities. The religions that are prevalent in the country are Hinduism, Christianity, Islam, Sikhism, Buddhism, and Jainism, with the freedom for citizens to practice any religion they want to. With the governance of 35 different states and union territories in the country, there has originated a sense of regionalism amongst the various parts, with different states displaying different cultures, which although eventually fuse through a common bond to showcase a national cultural identity. The Constitution of India has recognised 22 different languages that are prevalent in the country, out of which, Hindi is the official language and is spoken in most of the urban cities of India. Other than these 22 languages, there are hundreds of dialects that add to the multilingual nature of the country.

## Festivals

India is a land of festivals and fairs. Virtually celebrating each day of the year, there are more festivals celebrated in India than anywhere else in the world. Each festival pertains to different occasions, some welcome the seasons of the year, the harvest, the rains, or the full moon. Others celebrate religious occasions, the birthdays of divine beings and saints, or the advent of the New Year. A number of these festivals are common to most parts of India. However, they may be called by different names in various parts of the country or may be celebrated in a different fashion. Some of the festivals celebrated all over India are mentioned below. However, this section is still under enhancement. There are many other important festivals celebrated by various communities in India and this section shall be further enriched with information about them...

- [Janmashtami](#)
- [Christmas](#)
- [Rakshabandhan](#)
- [Deepawali](#)
- [Id-ul-Zuha](#)
- [Ramnavami](#)
- [Guru Nanak Jayanti](#) etc.